

JOHN EDWARD PORTER
10TH DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

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**Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1310**

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August 24, 1992

Mr. William S. Sessions, Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
10th and Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20535

Dear Mr. Sessions:

Miscellaneous - Non-Subversives

I recently received a letter from a constituent of mine from Wilmette, IL regarding the death of investigative journalist Daniel Casolaro. A copy of this letter is enclosed.

I would appreciate any information you can share with me regarding the allegations made in the letter and the suspicious circumstances surrounding Mr. Casolaro's death.

I appreciate your attention to this matter and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

John Edward Porter
Member of Congress

JEP:gus
Enclosure

ENCLOSURE

63-0-110537

Final Ack
9/14/92
Bumgarner

11/25-1992

Interim response
dated 8-21-92
CAO

August 11, 1992

Dear Representative John Porter (or Gus),

One year ago I wrote to you asking that you support an investigation into the death of investigative journalist Daniel Casolaro. Thank you for answering my letter, thank you for forwarding my letter to the CIA and FBI, and thank you for forwarding to me the response that you received back from the CIA. Apparently the FBI never answered you for I haven't received anything from you from them. As the CIA pointed out in the letter, it is the FBI that is responsible for looking into domestic cases such as this, so this is significant.

Tonight, the cable TV show "The Real Story" on CNBC (August 11, 1992 at 10:30 PM CST) aired a half hour report on the state of the facts surrounding Casolaro's death and the INSLAW case that he was investigating before he died. The authorities have claimed his death was a suicide but his friends and investigators are claiming he was murdered.

One of the guests on the show tonight was the movie actor Timothy Hutton who will be starring in a movie about Casolaro's death and who actually looks quite a bit like Casolaro. Timothy Hutton has been preparing for his part in the movie by talking to Casolaro's friends and family to find out what he was like and what had been his state of mind before his death. Hutton describes Casolaro as a positive person who "lived life in a full way." He says the description of him as a depressed person doesn't ring true. Hutton has also hired private investigators to gather information about the circumstances of his death.

Casolaro's theory linked government officials with October Surprise, BCCI, illegal arms sales to the Contras, and the INSLAW case. The House Judiciary Committee has called for an independent counsel to investigate potential criminal conduct by current and former Justice Department officials. The Judiciary Committee's requests for documents from the Justice Department have so far been refused.

Former Attorney General Elliot Richardson was also interviewed for the show. He is representing Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton who own INSLAW, the company which wrote the PROMIS computer software. They allege that the software was stolen by the Reagan Justice Department. Mr. Richardson stated that William Barr and his predecessor Thornburg have refused to appoint a special prosecutor and have not responded to his questions. He described their handling of the INSLAW case as "strange" and said that Barr has refused to look into the leads that he has tried to give to them. Of the 30 witnesses whose names were given to the Justice Department only one has yet been interviewed! He says that evidence points to illegal activities at high levels of government and that only an independent counsel would be genuine.

65-2-11037

ENCLOSURE

Casolaro was apparently close to finding out why the INSLAW software was stolen and how it related to other scandals. Jack Anderson, the columnist, had a segment on tonight's show and said there is evidence that Casolaro was murdered. This part of the show was produced by Ann Klenk who had been a girl friend of Danny. The official cause of death was "Exsanguinating hemorrhage to the wrists." There are a number of discrepancies concerning his death. Casolaro's brother Tony Casolaro, M.D. had spoken to the medical examiner, Dr. James Frost, after the death. The only injury given to him verbally at that time was of a small contusion on the arm. The ultimate official report stated there were contusions on the legs and head as well, indicating a struggle. There were unexplained drugs in his system. In the letter I wrote to you last year I mentioned first hearing an ex-CIA man on WBEZ's "Mid-Day with Sandra Gare" who speculated Casolaro was injected with a truth serum to find out where his papers were and get him to sign a suicide note. The blood was then drained out of his body in the bath tub so the drugs in his blood would not be found. His notes were missing and the suicide note has not been released to his family so they can have it verified by experts. All 65 pieces of evidence have been kept by the authorities. Three of his fingernails were said to be missing from chewing but it is more likely that they were broken in a fight since people who chew their fingernails don't just chew some of them. John Connelly, a guest journalist who has written articles for "Spy" magazine about the case believes the official report was "sanitized".

Dr. James Starrs, a criminal and forensic investigator who was interviewed, said there were "no hesitation marks" among the 8 deep cuts in his wrist which went down to the tendons. He says that Casolaro's "psychological autopsy" doesn't fit the facts of the case.

Casolaro had told Anderson that he was concerned about threats to his life. Anderson describes Casolaro's attitude as positive, nevertheless. It was a mysterious death.

Reasons have been given for a possible depression. He had run up a high debt, had no job, had immersed himself too much in the subject, and his book had been rejected for the third time. An article in "Vanity Fair" suggested that he may have staged his own death to attract attention to the case. According to those interviewed tonight, his friends do not believe that this is what happened.

Casolaro had been speaking to people connected with the Cabazon Indian Reservation, Wackenhut Security Corporation, and INSLAW and all are said to have "loose connections to the CIA." Also a man named Robert Booth Nichols was mentioned as being instrumental.

The Cabazon Indian reservation has 30 American Indians who got \$250,000,000 in project money from the United States government.

Drug running, money laundering, and illegal sales of arms to foreign countries were mentioned in connection with this reservation, which is not to say that the American Indians had anything to do with this except that their reservation was being used by others, perhaps to illegally ship guns to the Contras.

Wackenhut Security, often viewed as merely uniformed security police, was said to be a clandestine "shadow CIA" which has been operating for the last 20 years both inside and outside the United States doing things that the CIA wouldn't dare do since the probings of Senator Church's Committee. The board of directors of Wackenhut is made up of ex-members from all of the 3 letter organizations in the United States. It's a dangerous bunch to try to stop.

Elliot Richardson said there is an uncertain state of facts and that only an independent counsel could create a complete picture that would restore public confidence. Edwin Meese's wife owned stock in the company Hadron which was owned by Meese's friend Earl Brian. Brian wanted to buy the rights to the INSLAW software. Interestingly, Earl Brian owned the now bankrupt UPI and FNN, the Financial News Network, that then became CNBC, the cable network that I saw this program on tonight.

This case has apparently generated an underground following and the upcoming movie could do much to bring it above ground. If this happens and the Justice Department is allowed to continue stone-walling it could do much to hurt the public's confidence in their Justice Department. I hope that you can do something to help. Thank you.

WASH POST 9-11-92

U.S. Probe of Casolaro Death Sought

Democrats on House Panel Want Counsel to Look Into Writer's Fate

By Robert O'Harrow Jr.
Washington Post Staff Writer

Democrats on the House Judiciary Committee asked the Justice Department yesterday to name an independent counsel to investigate the death of Joseph Daniel Casolaro, the freelance writer who died in a West Virginia hotel room last year while probing allegations of government corruption.

The death of Casolaro, who was found in August 1991 with his wrists slit in a hotel bathtub in Martinsburg, W.Va., was ruled a suicide by West Virginia authorities. Family members and friends maintain he was slain by someone seeking to stop his efforts to establish links between alleged scandals involving officials at the White House and the Justice Department.

Yesterday, in a report to Attorney General William Barr, the committee said it had found numerous problems with the local investigation, including the facts that the crime scene was not immediately sealed and Casolaro's body apparently was embalmed prematurely.

The report also says local authorities may have ignored tips from an

FBI agent and two former federal prosecutors that Casolaro, 44, who lived in Fairfax County, had been in contact with dangerous organized-crime figures and came across covert intelligence operations shortly before his death.

The committee is interested in Casolaro because he was probing allegations that Justice Department officials had conspired to steal several million dollars in computer software from the Washington-based Inslaw Co. The committee has been investigating the Inslaw case for three years.

Casolaro's "death may not have been a suicide," the report said. "As long as the possibility exists that Danny Casolaro died as a result of his investigation in the Inslaw matter, it is imperative that further investigation be conducted."

The appeal for a renewed Casolaro probe came yesterday as part of a broader request that Barr appoint an independent counsel to investigate the Inslaw affair, including the possible roles of former attorneys general Edwin Meese III and Dick Thornburg and allegations of a cover-up conspiracy.

Barr had asked retired federal

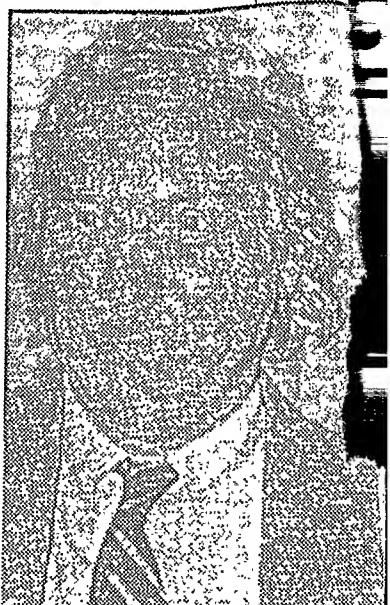
judge Nicholas Bua to look into the case last November, but committee chairman Jack Brooks (D-Tex.) yesterday said Bua's appointment was inappropriate because it bypassed the independent counsel process.

"A full investigation by an individual not under the direct control of the attorney general is necessary if we are to let in the sunlight and remove this persistent stain from the department's reputation," Brooks said.

A spokesman said Barr will respond to the committee's request within 30 days.

Casolaro's death drew nationwide attention to the Inslaw case after his family said he believed he was on the brink of piecing together an explosive series of scandals involving government officials and had gone to Martinsburg to meet a key source. Family members said he was too upbeat in the days before his death to kill himself.

Casolaro's death was initially ruled a suicide, but Martinsburg police reopened the case after questions were raised. After more than 1,000 man-hours investigating the death, police again ruled it a suicide early this year.



JOSEPH DANIEL CASOLARO
... 1991 death twice ruled a suicide

The medical examiner who conducted a detailed forensic examination of Casolaro's body said yesterday that another investigation is unnecessary because most of the questions the committee is asking can be answered by available information.

"We stand ready to sit down and discuss this whole thing again," said James Frost, the state deputy medical examiner. "Everything we've got is available."

10-11-37
ENCLOSURE

September 14, 1992

Honorable John Edward Porter
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-1310

Miscellaneous - Non-Subversive

Dear Congressman Porter:

I am writing in further reply to your August 24th correspondence on behalf of an anonymous constituent who set forth various allegations, one of which suggests that the death of investigative reporter Joseph Daniel Casolaro was other than a suicide. It was also indicated that the FBI did not respond to your previous correspondence on this same matter.

Enclosed is a copy of my September 30, 1991, reply advising that the matter had been referred to our Criminal Investigative Division for review and appropriate action. Thereafter, your correspondence was forwarded by letter of October 30, 1991, to Honorable Lawrence E. Walsh, Office of Independent Counsel, Suite 701, 555 13th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004.

The FBI did not investigate the death of Mr. Casolaro since the evidence failed to reveal that a Federal law within the FBI's investigative jurisdiction had been violated or that Mr. Casolaro was the victim of foul play. No subsequent information has been received to indicate such a violation.

I hope this reply will be helpful to you in responding to your constituent.

Sincerely yours,

61

John E. Collingwood
Inspector in Charge
Office of Public and
Congressional Services

Enclosure

63-0-110538

OPCS, to SSRA

b6
b7C

Dep. Dir. 1 - Pittsburgh - Enclosures (2)
ADD Adm. ReBucal 9/3/92 from [REDACTED]
ADD Inv. [REDACTED] Martinsburg RA.
Asst. Dir.:
Adm. Servs. 1 - WMFO - Enclosures (2)
Crim. Inv. 1 - Mr. Collingwood
Ident. 1 - Mr. [REDACTED] - Enclosures (2)
Info. Mgmt. 1 - Mr. [REDACTED] - Enclosures (7)
Insp. 1 - Mr. [REDACTED] - Enclosures (7)
Intell. 1 - Congressional Affairs Office - Enclosures (7)
Lab. Legal Coun. Tech. Servs.
Training Cong. Affs. Off. BHM:majh (11)
Off. of EEO Off. Liaison & Int. Affs.
Off. of Public Affs. Telephone Rm. Director's Sec'y

SEE NOTE PAGE TWO

MAIL ROOM [REDACTED]

Honorable John Edward Porter

NOTE: Congressman John Edward Porter wrote again on behalf of an anonymous constituent who sets forth allegations that the death of investigative reporter JOSEPH DANIEL CASOLARO, who was doing research for a novel, was the result of foul play rather than a suicide. The constituent indicates that a movie starring actor TIMOTHY HUTTON is in the works, with HUTTON playing the role of CASOLARO. The allegations try to establish a link between the research CASOLARO was doing for his novel and issues involving BCCI, illegal arms sales to the Contras, INSLAW Software, and his death. Per call to SSRA [redacted] Martinsburg RA, the FBI has never opened a case on the death of CASOLARO. The services of the FBI Laboratory and Identification Division were offered to local authorities, who chose not to seek our assistance due to adverse publicity. Instead, they sought assistance from other experts, including a blood-splatter expert. SSRA [redacted] further advised that to date, there is nothing to suggest that the death of CASOLARO is anything other than a suicide, despite theories by uninformed individuals to the contrary. Interim reply sent 8/31/92. Previous reply dated 9/30/91 was prepared by SSA [redacted] CAO. (see [redacted])

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b7C

APPROVED: *See J*

Director	Adm. Servs.	Laboratory	Off. of Liaison
Deputy Dir.	Crim. Inv.	Legal Coun.	& Int. Affs.
ADD-Adm.	Ident.	Tech. Servs.	Off. of
ADD-Inv.	Info. Mgmt.	Training	Public Rel.
	Inspection	Crim. Inv. Off.	
	Intell.	Off. of EEO	

See J

ABM